

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent Bryan and his family in our Nation's capital.

God bless Bryan, my dear friend. Congrats, and go West Texas.

BUILD BACK BETTER ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. ESCOBAR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, Congressional Democrats have been focused on working with President Biden to deliver long overdue investments for the American people and for our future.

We started earlier this year with the American Jobs Act, which got critical resources, including vaccines, into our communities and put money in people's pockets. We helped struggling businesses and schools, and we did so much more.

Now, we are on the cusp of passing two bills that will enormously improve the lives of all Americans, the Build Back Better Act and the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. These two bills together will rebuild America's aging and failing infrastructure, create jobs, cut taxes and lower costs for families, protect and recognize the contributions of immigrants, tackle the climate crisis, and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, my district of El Paso, Texas, has long suffered from chronic poverty due to lack of access to many resources and economic opportunities.

On healthcare, my State of Texas has the highest rate of uninsured residents in the Nation. In my community of El Paso, a quarter of my residents have absolutely no health insurance whatsoever.

On climate, El Paso has seen the second highest increase in average temperatures over the past 45 years with the number of 100-degree days predicted to double.

On family care, nearly half of the people, 48 percent of the people, live in a childcare desert with no access to childcare whatsoever.

On education, in my State of Texas your education and the amount of money invested in K-12 kids depends on your ZIP Code and where you live.

The historic investments that we will be making with both of these bills will strengthen healthcare access to Texas families by expanding Medicare coverage for those who have been denied. They will protect our communities from the consequences of the climate crisis by helping us lower emissions, advancing a clean energy economy, and advancing environmental justice.

These bills will support families with the child tax credit, which will benefit 173,000 children in El Paso alone, in addition to the investments in childcare, home healthcare, paid family and medical leave, workforce development, and universal pre-K, which is probably the best predictor for school success and for kids who end up going to college.

My community needs that. My kids in El Paso deserve that.

Americans everywhere need this health and support, and they need it now. These investments are fully paid for. They will not add to the deficit, and because these expenditures represent less than one percent of our GDP over the next decade, and because they are paid for in part by making corporations and the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share, the Build Back Better Act will not increase inflation.

I am so proud to have played a role in crafting these bills. I am so proud to advance them and ensure that they uplift El Paso families, improve our economy, and help save our planet.

RECOGNIZING BILL WOMACK, WORLD WAR II HERO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PFLUGER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in advance of Veterans Day, to take a moment for our country, to take a moment and to thank those who have served. You are going to see some faces on here, and I am just going to highlight five individuals from my district in West Texas, amongst the thousands who have offered to serve. Many of these are part of the Greatest Generation and this is the greatest country in the world, and it is because of their sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a World War II hero, Mr. Bill Womack of Midland, Texas, who celebrated his 100th birthday this year. Mr. Womack joined the National Guard immediately after graduating high school. And after the Pearl Harbor bombing, Mr. Womack became an artilleryman stationed in North Africa and Europe.

Bill is one of the legendary Texas Liberators, a group of 488 Texans who fought against the Nazi regime to liberate Jewish prisoners. He was among the group of heroes who first breached the concentration camp, Dachau, and helped bring World War II prisoners to safety.

Countless lives were saved because of the efforts and the selflessness of Mr. Womack.

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RECOGNIZING PHIL GEORGE

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a hero of mine, Mr. Phil George, of San Angelo, Texas, a distinguished veteran and university basketball coach.

Mr. George is a legend in my hometown of San Angelo. He is a veteran of not only World War II and Korea, but also of Vietnam where he spent years as an incredibly talented fighter pilot.

When our Nation called, he answered, multiple times. I cannot overstate the sacrifices that he made both professionally and also in his community after his service in the military. Not only is he a hero, but he is also a mentor to so many.

He leaves a legacy in San Angelo to this day of the selfless ability to lead others, to motivate others, to a life of service. His stories are incredible. His faith in God is palpable, and his love for his late wife, Toddy, and his entire family, are inspiring.

In addition to his record of service, he has an incredible record as a basketball coach and athletic director at Angelo State University.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. George for his service to this Nation.

RECOGNIZING MAYNARD SCHWERTNER

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Maynard Schwertner, a Vietnam veteran who spent his entire life in the service of this country, both in Vietnam and back at home.

As a well driller in Vietnam, Mr. Schwertner spent his time providing clean water for civilians and the military. Back at home, Mr. Schwertner has dedicated his life to serving fellow veterans, and that includes helping establish Vietnam veterans chapters, memorials, and support groups in San Angelo, Texas. He is a distinguished member of the community who lives a life dedicated to supporting our Nation and our Armed Forces.

RECOGNIZING GILBERTO TORRES

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Gilberto Torres for his service in World War II. Gilberto was part of the second wave of the D-day invasion of Normandy, the legendary amphibious invasion that turned the tide of the war and led the allies to liberate Europe.

Tragically, when trekking through war-torn Europe, Gilberto was fired upon and struck by enemy machine guns. He survived his injuries and was honorably discharged, but not before earning many medals for his heroism and his bravery, including the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal, and many more. He is in his 90s today and he hopes to visit Normandy. I hope he can do that.

RECOGNIZING J.L. STEVENS

Mr. PFLUGER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. J.L. Stevens, a west Texan, a World War II veteran who also took part in both the Normandy invasion on D-day and the invasion of Okinawa.

His service to this country was inspired at the age of 17 as he enlisted in the Navy with the desire to follow in the footsteps of his brother. Stevens' sacrifice helped create a safer world for his two daughters, his six grandchildren, and his 12 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for us to recognize the service of all of these servicemembers as we approach Veterans Day. These are just a few stories, among many, bipartisan in all of our districts. My hope is that this country can look to the service of these, many of whom are part of the greatest generation, and we can realize that this is the greatest country in the world, but it is not without sacrifice.